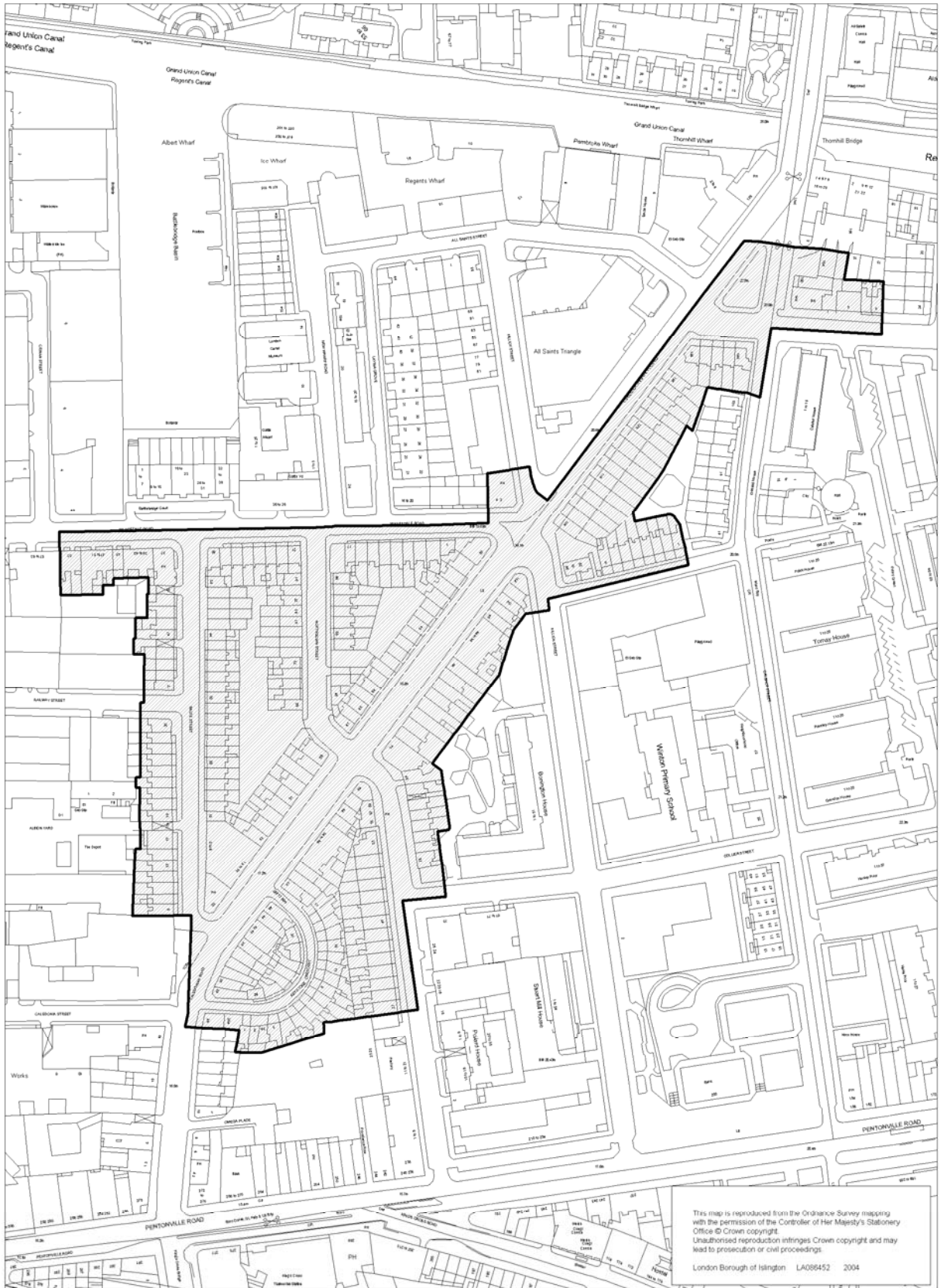


**Keystone Crescent (CA14)
Conservation Area Design Guidelines**

January 2002

Keystone Crescent (CA14)



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KEYSTONE CRESCENT

- 14.1 The Council will operate special policies in the Keystone Crescent Conservation Area in order to preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the area.**
- 14.2 The area was developed with terraces of housing between about 1830 and 1850, partly in response to the new link (Caledonian Road) between the New Road (Euston Road - Pentonville Road) and the Holloway area. Much of the development is contemporary with this and also with the coming of the Regent's Canal (1820) and King's Cross Railway Station (1852), both of which acted as stimuli to industrial development to the north and west of the area. In spite of the dilapidated state of some property and some unfortunate recent alterations (mostly at ground floor level) this area remains visually of undoubted coherent character and largely unchanged since it was first laid out. There are two exceptions, one at 99-121 Caledonian Road (a recent red-brick building) and some small terraces of modern houses recently built to fill gaps in Northdown Street, Balfe Street and Calshot Street. The latter terraces are not seriously at odds with adjoining houses.
- 14.3 The Council will operate its land use policies so as to enhance the character and vitality of the area. Planning permission will not be granted to change, expand or intensify uses which would harm the character of the conservation area.**
- 14.4 The character of the area is mixed commercial and residential with many 'high street' premises along Caledonian Road up to the junction with Killick Street on one side and 73 Caledonian Road on the other with mainly residential back streets. The existing runs of commercial use at ground floor and basement level along Caledonian Road and in the south part of Northdown Street are an important part of the character of the area and should be retained. Permission will not normally be given to intensify or enlarge non-residential uses elsewhere, and the Council will examine ways in which it can assist or encourage the reoccupation of upper floors above commercial premises.
- 14.5 The Council wishes to retain all statutory and locally listed buildings together with all other 19th century buildings and structures in the area together with the shopfronts listed below. Conservation area consent for their removal will only be granted where there are special circumstances or where the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.**

Caledonian Road: 28, 30, 32, 34, 40-46, 60, 70, 74, 76, 78, 82, 84, 86, 33 (Malt and Hops PH), 35-57, 61, 65, 98, 148 (Thornhill Arms PH)

Northdown Street: 46

- 14.6 PPG15 states that the general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. It also states that the assessment of a conservation area should always note those unlisted buildings which make such a contribution. Here the important buildings are protected by statutory listing but the Council considers the shopfronts critical to the character and historic charm of the area and their loss would reduce the historic and architectural interest of the area. Some original shopfronts remain. The Council will resist their removal and will expect any damaged ones to be restored.
- 14.7 New buildings should conform to the height, scale, and proportions of existing buildings in the immediate area.**
- 14.8 Raising heights of new buildings above existing heights, including raising parapet heights above those prevailing, would be out of keeping with the area. Many existing buildings in the area were built on small, narrow fronted plots which gives them a strong vertical emphasis. This verticality is one of the main physical characteristics of the area that should be conserved.
- 14.9 Where new shopfronts span more than one property the break between the properties should be marked with pilasters to keep the vertical stress. Single pane windows without a stall-riser are not appropriate for the area.
- 14.10 The potential for new development within the conservation area is limited to a few infill sites, and 99-121 Caledonian Road. Rebuilding of 104 Caledonian Road and 30 Northdown Street is particularly to be encouraged. Any redevelopment at 99-121 Caledonian Road will require consideration on its own merits, but must contribute to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 14.11 On redevelopment and refurbishment schemes the Council will normally require the use of vernacular materials.**
- 14.12 The existing character and appearance of the area is created by the survival of 19th century buildings. These were built using materials suited to labour-intensive methods of construction - brick, timber for windows and doors and slate or tile roofing. It is important that new buildings, and refurbishments of existing buildings, blend in with and reinforce this character and care must be taken with the choice of brick and bond. Modern materials - glass, steel and concrete - may be acceptable as long as the design of the new buildings acknowledges the scale

and character of the area. Large, flat, uniform planes on elevations are not appropriate.

- 14.13 Shopfronts in the area should also use traditional materials such as painted softwood, iron and render/stucco. Natural aluminium is not an acceptable material. Coated aluminium or steel will only be acceptable if the design of the shopfront is appropriate for the building and enhances the conservation area. Full guidance on appropriate design and detailing is given in the Council's 'Shopfront Design Guide'.
- 14.14 Full width rear extensions higher than one storey or half width rear extensions higher than two storeys, will not normally be permitted, unless it can be shown that no harm will be caused to the character of the area.**
- 14.15 The Council wishes to preserve the scale and integrity of the existing buildings by ensuring that extensions are subordinate to the mass and height of the main building.
- 14.16 New roof extensions visible from street levels or public area will only be allowed on 28-52 Caledonian Road (to the existing pattern) and to 46-52 Balfe Street (to an appropriate design to be agreed). Elsewhere extensions will not be permitted.**
- 14.17 The Council is opposed to the erection of plant rooms, air conditioning units and other services including water tanks and radio or satellite equipment at roof level where this can be seen from street level or public space, including long views from side streets.**
- 14.17 Notwithstanding paragraph 14.16 above, the Council will take into consideration the listed status of any of the above properties when considering appropriate extensions. Special regard must be paid to the retention of historic fabric where it exists and any extension which might be acceptable in townscape terms will still require careful and detailed examination.
- 14.18 The roofline of a street, particularly on a terrace, is a major component of its character. Alterations which are not in keeping with the existing roofs have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the conservation area. Although there is a variety of roof forms in this area, the most common is the hidden valley roof behind a parapet. New roof extensions will only be allowed where a significant number already exists and where additional extensions will create a more harmonious roof line. The destruction of chimney stacks and pots is damaging to the character of the terraces in the area. Where traditional mansards are permitted, the rear elevation should be mansarded, not in vertical brickwork, so as to maintain the butterfly or other original profile at the back.

- 14.20 The Council is opposed to the erection of large vent pipes on the rear elevation of commercial properties, where this is harmful to amenity. Where possible existing chimney flues should be used. Any new flues should be modest in size and painted a dark colour.**
- 14.21 Large flues and vent pipes can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that these are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.
- 14.22 The Council will not normally permit the filling in or covering over of front basement areas, or the widening of front entrance steps, or the construction of dustbin or meter enclosures. The opening up of pavements not be permitted where this did not occur historically.**
- 14.23 Many properties in the conservation area have front basement areas, protected by cast iron railings, which are important to the character of the area. The filling in or covering over of these areas prejudices light to the basements and spoils the appearance of the front elevation. The widening of front entrance steps, and the construction of dustbin and meter enclosures have a detrimental effect on the area. Dustbins and meter enclosures should be discreetly located so as to be invisible from the street.
- 14.24 These developments will only be permitted where it can be shown that the development would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. In addition, the needs of disabled people will be considered exceptional to this policy and essential adaptations will be allowed.
- 14.25 The Council will not permit the removal of original or traditional front railings within the area. Owners are encouraged to reinstate traditional metal railings (where these existed) with each railing sunk into a stone coping (except in Keystone Crescent where railings run straight into the pavement). Gates to give access to front basement area steps must match exactly the original railings and be painted black. Car ports in Keystone Crescent will not be permitted.**
- 14.26 Traditional railings contribute to the character of the area and complement the existing buildings. There is a wide variety of modern copies of traditional railings available to replace any which are missing or broken beyond repair.
- 14.27 Unsightly or damaged paving should be replaced by traditional slab paving. Keystone Crescent should be paved in yorkstone if possible. Cast iron coal hole covers in yorkstone surrounds in the pavements must be kept. Granite kerbs, cornerstones, cobbles and setts to entrance ways must be retained and replaced in situ if damaged or dug up.**

14.28 The Council will seek to improve the quality of paving, street furniture, lighting and open space in the area.

14.29 The street surfaces and furniture also contribute to the character and appearance of an area. The traditional street materials complement those used in the buildings and where they exist they must be kept. Where replacement is necessary the Council will insist on a modern alternative which is the closest possible to the existing.

14.30 Traffic signs should be rationalised and unnecessary poles removed wherever possible. Some signs, such as street names, should be placed on buildings or boundary walls rather than on their own independent supports. Concrete and yellow and black painted metal bollards should be replaced with metal bollards to the Council's agreed specifications. Street lighting should also be replaced in due course, in accordance with the Council's standards.

14.31 The Council will not give advertising consent for new hoardings and will seek to remove those which do not have consent.

14.32 Advertising hoardings give an impression of clutter and lack of interest in an area. They also often obscure the nature and detailing of a building to which they are attached. The Council is opposed to the proliferation of advertising hoardings in the area and will take action against the owners, advertisers and their agents for the removal of unauthorised hoardings.

14.33 Internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted. Other signs should be of appropriate scale and design and conform to the Council's standards.

14.34 Advertisements and signs can often detract from the visual amenity of the area. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that signs, display panels and advertisements are appropriately located and are of a suitable size and design.

NOTE: An 'Article Four Direction' now applies to Keystone Crescent Conservation Area. This means that certain selected building works previously regarded as 'permitted development' will now require planning permission. A quick reference summary is set out at the end of this document. However for further details please contact the Planning Service.